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## Gold mice elude Silicon Valley Congress members

Timothy Roberts

The Bay Area's congressional delegation didn't make the top cut in the 2003 awards for best Congressional web sites. Neither U.S. Senator made the gold, and the only members of Congress from the state to win Gold Mouse Awards were Richard Pombo of Stockton (<http://www.house.gov/pombo>) and George Radanovich of Fresno (<http://www.radanovich.house.gov>). Both are Republicans.

The award program funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts and was conducted by George Washington University and the Congressional Management Foundation. The awards were announced Monday morning in Washington.

The awards are aimed at encouraging the use of the Internet for communication between voters and their elected representatives. The study examined 610 web sites, those of members of Congress, Senators and various committees.

Winners of Gold, Silver or Bronze awards "consider their Web sites 'virtual offices,' providing significant benefits for both the offices and the constituents," according to the study.

California Sen. Dianne Feinstein, a Democrat, was the winner of a Silver Mouse Award for her Web site (<http://feinstein.senate.gov>). The study found that her site acts as virtual encyclopedia, clearly outlining her position on issues and provides a breakdown on her voting record.

Congressman Mike Honda, D-San Jose, received a Silver Mouse Award for his Web site (<http://www.house.gov/honda>), which the study said provides in-depth information on a range of issues.

California Sen. Barbara Boxer, a Democrat who is up for re-election next year, got a Bronze Mouse Award for her Web site (<http://boxer.senate.gov>.)

Confusingly enough, Senate Web addresses begin with "http://", while House of Representatives Web addresses begin with "www."

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